REPORT

ON THE

MEDICO-LEGAL DUTIES OF CORONERS.

BY

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ONE OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

"At sessions ther was he lord and sire,
Ful often time he was knight of the shire
A shereve hadde he ben, and a coronour,
Was no wher swiche a worthy vavasour."

CHAUCER'S *Frankelein.*

[Extracted from the Transactions of the American Medical Association.]

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REPORT.

THE office of Coroner is one of the most important and ancient known to the common law; its duties involve questions of the greatest interest to society, to government, and to the rights and privileges of the individual citizen.

The office is first mentioned in a charter granted in the year 925, by King Athelstan, to the authorities of Beverley. The name, indicating the relationship of the office to the sovereign authority of the realm, being derived from *Corona*, because its duties exacted a special attention to the pleas of the crown, or cases wherein the immediate prerogatives and interests of the sovereign were involved. In England, the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench is considered, *ex-officio*, the chief Coroner of the kingdom, and is endowed with the power of exercising the functions and jurisdiction of the office in any portion of the realm, not being restricted as the deputy coroners are to their counties and districts. When the wardenship of the counties was relinquished by the earls, the coroner became a peace officer of equal rank with the sheriff. *Mirror*, c. i. 3. As above mentioned, the office dates back to a remote antiquity; the *Mirror* says it was instituted by one of the Saxon monarchs (*Mirror*, c. i. s. 3); but the office, as at present constituted, was not clearly established until after the Norman conquest. In the Capitula of Henry II., and in those in the reign of Richard I., the justices were enjoined to select "three knights and one clerk in each county," who were styled *Custodes placitorum coronæ*, keepers of the pleas of the crown. *History of English Law*, by George Crabbe, c. xi., 1831.

In later times, the character and importance of the office have been much diminished, making striking contrast with the high estimation it was held in by our ancestors, in days when none but

the gentry and knights of the shire were deemed eligible. A statute of *Westminster*, 3 *Edward I.*, c. 10, enacted, that none but "lawful and discreet knights" should be chosen; and as an illustration of the requirements of the times, an instance is mentioned in the 5 *Edward III.*, of a man being removed from the office, because he was not a knight of the shire, but only a merchant or tradesman. 2 *Instit.* 32.

By the statute *De Militibus*, 1 *Edward II.*, a qualification was required of land, to the amount £20 per annum, to enable him to secure his elevation to the order of knighthood, which was then a prerequisite for the office—the theory being, that the coroner should possess lands enough to maintain, not only the dignity of his office, but to be held responsible for any fines and forfeitures that might be levied on him for any official malfeasance or misconduct. The common law of England being of force in the United States, the leading and important duties of coroners are similar in the two countries, viz: to make due and diligent inquiry into the cause of death, where there is reason to believe foul and criminal means have been used, or where a dead body has been discovered under suspicious or mysterious circumstances.

The authority of a coroner is necessarily judicial in its character; though he can make no inquisition of any felony, save that of a violent death, under suspicious circumstances, and, then always on view of the body, *Super visum corporis.* 4 *Instit.* 271 and 2 *Hale* 65.

Previous to the publication of the Magna Charta, Coroners not only received accusations against offenders, but they also proceeded to try them.

The present defined powers of coroners, in Great Britain and the United States, unless modified by British statutes and American acts, are derived from the English *Stat. de Officio Coronatoris*, 4 *Edward I.*, s. 2. It provides, that where a death takes place suddenly, under suspicious circumstances, the coroner shall, by his warrant, summon a jury to make due inquiry, upon view of body, into the manner of the killing; who were present; and to examine the body; and that he may likewise commit any person to prison who may be adjudged as the author of the crime, and bind over the witnesses by recognizances to appear at the next term of the court.

It is not necessary that the inquisition should be held in the place where the body was found, or viewed, 2 *Hawkins, Pleas of the*

Crown, c. 9, ¶ 28, but if the inquisition of death be held without the view, the whole proceedings are held to be void.

From the above condensed statement of the history and legal obligations of coroners, we see that deep interests are involved in the proper discharge of their duties. The character, liberty, and perhaps the life of a citizen accused of crime, on the one hand, and on the other, the aiding of public justice, in establishing the guilt and securing the punishment of the actual criminal. For the faithful execution of the duties of the office, it demands, on the part of those to whom it is intrusted, qualifications of a high character. In addition to an intimate acquaintance with what are ordinarily termed the Institutes of Medicine and Surgery, they must also have a practical knowledge of toxicology in all its details, habits of close and cautious observation and analysis, and a familiarity with the elementary laws of evidence, and with the principles of medical logic.

Many of the questions which fall within the scope of a coroner's inquisition, are of an intricate and most perplexing character, a correct solution of which can only be arrived at by minds the best instructed, and habituated to their investigation. A human body is found in the river, or suspended by the neck. In such a case, several facts are to be established by the inquest: whether the extinction of life is due, in the one instance, to asphyxia from drowning, and, in the other, to asphyxia from strangulation, or whether death had not been produced by other means, and the body then cast into the water, or suspended by the neck, for the purpose of concealing the actual mode of the death. Should the cause of the death be traced to drowning or strangulation, then arises another question: whether the immersion or suspension of the body was suicidal, accidental, or the work of wicked and felonious hands.

Even centuries ago, so important were the facts considered to be, which a skilfully conducted inquest could elicit, that the statute 4 *Edward I.* required, in the most explicit terms, "that it is to be inquired of them that be drowned, or suddenly dead, and after such bodies are to be seen, whether they were so drowned or slain, or strangulated by the sign of a cord tied straight about their necks."

"Also, all wounds ought to be viewed, the length, breadth, and deepness, and with what weapons, and in what part of the body the wound or hurt is." This old English statute requires, in

the most explicit terms, the kind of examination which only the skill of a medical expert could accomplish.

In many cases some of these questions can be satisfactorily settled by the evidence of persons having cognizance, more or less direct, of the facts: in others, however, they only can be solved by the facts deduced from pathological anatomy, and other circumstances connected with the dead body, the cause of the extinction of life in which is the subject of the inquest.

Are the persons usually selected to fill the office of coroner, or those whom, in accordance with law, they call to their aid in the capacity of jurors, qualified for the faithful and satisfactory management of such an inquest?

Are they those, generally, who, from education, pursuits in life, and their daily associations, are the best prepared to solve even the least intricate of the medico-legal questions involved in the inquest they are solemnly sworn justly and truly to make? An inquest upon which so much depends—the finding of which will, perchance, form the basis for the arrest, indictment and trial of a human being for the most heinous crime known to the law—wilful, premeditated murder, the penalty of which is an ignominious death upon the scaffold.

In the course of time, abuses creeping into the system, and from neglect, this important office has been permitted to fall into disrespect, and into low, ignorant, or incompetent hands.

We have strong evidence of the care and caution with which these officers were selected in olden days, when it was enacted by statute *Westminster* 1, 3 *Edward I.*, c. 10, "Forasmuch as mean persons and indiscreet now of late are commonly chosen to the office of coroners, when it is requisite that persons *honest*, *loyal* and *wise*, shall occupy such offices; it is provided, that through all shires sufficient men shall be chosen to be coroners, of the most loyal and *wise* knights, which know, will and may best attend upon such offices, and lawfully shall attach and present pleas of the crown."—*Hawkins, P. C.*, vol. iii. c. 9, p. 101. London, 1795.

Do the laws require, or does public opinion demand, that the coroner should be a regular, well educated and otherwise well qualified medical man, or, at the least, a person well instructed in the duties of his office?

In some of the States of our Republic, there is some legal provision confining the appointment to medical men; but generally, any citizen, whom the dominant political party of the day may, in

its wisdom or caprice, think proper to elect to the office, is forthwith invested with all the duties, powers, and time-honored prerogatives of coroner. Whatever may be his character or fitness, to him are intrusted the primary steps in the investigation of every case of alleged or presumed homicide that may occur within the county, and upon the finding of his inquest, a citizen may be arrested and placed under duress, until such time as a court shall determine his guilt or innocence.

There is legal provision, it is true, that the coroner shall summon to his aid, in the prosecution of his inquest, a certain number of good and lawful men, and that upon their verdict shall be based the finding of the inquisition.

In the composition of the coroner's jury, is care generally observed to select it from among the discreet and intelligent classes of the community? Is it not usually formed by summoning any passer-by—any one, in fact, who may chance to be in the neighborhood where the inquest is held—probably the idler, or the ignorant laborer? or, as it has been the case where the compensation of jurors is liberal, under the administrations of certain coroners, when those officers provide themselves with a permanent and ambulant jury, are its members competent to the solemn and momentous duties devolved upon them by the laws of their country?

Your Committee fear that the only response that can, in truth and candor, be given to these questions, must invariably be in the negative.

As every inquest involves a medical principle, your Committee are pained to acknowledge that, from the shameless and disgraceful manner in which coroners' inquests in most of the United States are necessarily conducted, from the incompetency or want of zeal and attention of that officer, these inquests are rendered loose, vague, hurried, and ill-adapted to the purposes for which they are intended at common law—the discovery of the cause of death in cases of presumed or alleged felonious killing—the identification of the body, and the collection of that evidence which can often only be susceptible of verification immediately after the discovery of the corpse, and before any change has been made in it and in the condition of the surrounding objects.

The superficial view cast by the jurors upon the dead body presented for their inspection—many of them avoiding to approach it closely, either from repugnance to the sight or contact of the dead, especially when mutilated or disfigured by wounds, bathed in blood,

or in a state of partial decomposition, or from fear of contracting some contagious or pestilential disease which might possibly have been the cause of death—is scarcely a formal compliance with the requirements of the law.

Your Committee believe it is usual, though not always, for a post-mortem examination to be made for the instruction of the coroner and jury, by some medical man, and, where there is a suspicion of poisoning, for the contents of the stomach to be submitted, for analysis, to the chemist. Occasionally this autopsy and analysis are conducted by persons in all respects fully competent; but too often they are given to unskilful and inexpericnced hands, unable or unwilling to perform them properly, or to derive from the facts of the case any positive and reliable conclusion.

When the individual whose death is supposed to have been the result of wilful violence or of any felonious practice, leaves behind him relatives or friends able and willing to bring to condign punishment those who shall be ascertained to have been instrumental in destroying his life, the medico-legal investigation is generally fully and properly executed; but when it is left entirely to the coroner, he must be content to procure whoever may be willing to undertake the examination for the very inadequate compensation allowed by law—when any provision is made for the payment of such services—the physician being expected, in the District of Columbia and in some of the States, to perform all medico-legal investigations gratuitously. Occasionally, it is true, the mere love of science and the pursuit of knowledge will induce the skilful anatomist or the competent chemist to volunteer his services.

A medico-legal examination is a subject of too much importance to allow that its performance be left to the zeal of friendship, the judgment of the coroner, or the possible enlistment of some devotee of science. Its faithful performance should be invariably secured by legal provisions, and a certain and adequate compensation assigned, in order that the aid it is capable of yielding to the cause of public justice may be available in the case of the humblest and poorest as of the most distinguished and wealthy citizen. For the constitution and laws of these United States, under which we have the privilege to live, establish the perfect liberty, equality and fraternity of us all.

There are many cases in which the results of a properly conducted medico-legal investigation can *alone* lead to a correct conclusion as to the cause of death, to a confirmation of moral testimony,

and enable a court and petit jury to determine the guilt or innocence of the individual indicted for murder. There is no case in which it will not lend important aid in protecting the character, liberties, and lives of our citizens, and in rendering criminal law more clear, prompt, and certain in the detection and punishment of crime.

As coroners' inquests are now constituted, the findings are based solely upon the testimony of whatever witnesses are presented for examination—which evidence is frequently of the loosest and most irrelevant character—the statements of the physician—if there happen to be one—who attended the person whose death is the subject of inquest, previous to his decease, and the testimony of whoever made the post-mortem examination subsequently. The medical evidence being seldom, if ever, properly compared and tested with that derived from other sources. It is not surprising, therefore, to your Committee, that the verdicts of such hasty and unreliable inquests should be so frequently dismissed by grand juries, or essentially modified, if not entirely rejected, by the decisions of the courts before whom the cases are finally tried.

Among other abuses, there is no feature more objectionable, to which the Committee would direct the attention of the Association, than the publicity and indecent haste with which the proceedings before coroners' inquests are usually conducted. A death takes place under circumstances of profound mystery, or such as arouse strong presumption that a foul and horrid murder has been perpetrated, as unhappily illustrated in the recent Burdell tragedy in the city of New York. The public mind, through the instrumentality of the press, is wrought up to a state of frantic excitement. The busy tongue of rumor, prompted by imagination, spreads abroad statements, probable and improbable, having not the slightest foundation in truth. Innocent parties are either boldly accused or suspected of the murderous deed by the popular voice, as though they had already been convicted by the most conclusive evidence. Amid this excitement the coroner's jury assembles at the scene of the "bloody tragedy," and proceeds to make "due and diligent inquiry" into the cause of the death that has occurred, and which, perhaps, is clothed with the profoundest mystery. Can the coroner discharge the duties of his office with truth and impartiality, uninfluenced by the various reports retailed, magnified and commented on by an excited, clamorous, and probably indignant populace? Every step during the investigation is narrowly watched, and the entire pro-

ceedings of the jury are open to all who may be directed by idle curiosity to attend them, and become, in their turn, the subject of criticism and exaggeration to the neighborhood, if not to the entire community. To the guilty party there are often revealed circumstances indicating the strength of the suspicions as to his agency in the murder that has been perpetrated, and the completeness or deficiency of the chain of circumstantial evidence by which the crime may be fastened upon him, to enable him to mislead legal inquiry, or, at least, to elude the grasp of justice; while, on the other hand, the testimony adduced before the inquest is either so irrelevant, that, if not ruled out, it is so often distorted by prejudice and shaded by the rumors prevalent among the populace, and so seldom sifted and tested by a judicious cross-examination, as to be seized upon by idle, inconsiderate, or malicious tongues to cast suspicion upon some one who has not had the slightest agency in causing the death under investigation, rendering it difficult, it may be, for him to prove his entire innocence, and, in consequence, leaving a slight stain upon his reputation forever afterwards.

It may be urged that, inasmuch as the inquest is only preliminary, and its verdict is not final, any error that may be committed in the proceedings, leading to a mistake in the finding, can be productive of no permanent injury, an opportunity being afforded to correct the one and rectify the other when the case is called for trial before a court and petit jury. If there were any weight in this remark, it would be equivalent to an admission that the action of the coroner and his jury is, in all cases, worse than useless. It is not true, however, that when the inquest of the coroner is conducted in so imperfect and careless a manner as to lead to a return not borne out by the true facts of the case, no mischief is produced. No mischief! Harm, serious and grievous harm, is too often done. It is evident that serious detriment must invariably result to society, and a very great impediment be presented to the free course of justice, so long as the slightest doubt exists as to a correct finding, in any case, of the preliminary medico-legal investigation.

The object of the coroner's inquest is, to determine, with as much certainty as the nature of the case and the present state of our knowledge will permit, the cause by which life has been extinguished in every instance in which a judicial inquiry is demanded by the laws of the State. It is all-important that this preliminary inquest be fully and satisfactorily accomplished, and its result be presented to the court and jury that are finally to pass upon the

guilt or innocence of the parties who stand accused of homicide, in a form that will neither admit of doubt nor of cavil.

Your Committee believe, however, that this can scarcely be anticipated so long as the office of coroner is constituted and conducted as it now is throughout the United States.

The important functions of the office, however, cannot with safety be dispensed with; they must be performed by some one; and hence comes up the important question, the consideration of which has been intrusted to the present committee, in pursuance of a resolution adopted at the Philadelphia meeting of the National Medical Association, namely, "What measures should be adopted to remedy the evils existing in the present methods of holding coroners' inquests?"

The first measure, it is evident, will be to provide by law for the proper qualifications of the officer upon whom the medico legal duties now intrusted to the coroner's office are conferred, for their correct and faithful performance.

In all the cases in which an inquest is required to be held by the coroner, three questions present themselves: 1. What was the cause of death? 2. Was it the result of criminal agency? And, should this second question be answered in the affirmative, 3. By whom was the criminal act perpetrated?

The solution of the first of these questions should, in our opinion, be submitted to a special commission composed entirely of experts, and the proper investigation of the other left to the jury; and whatever may occur in the course of the inquiry instituted by the special experts, in the least calculated to throw light upon the second or third questions, can be readily communicated to the jurors, for their instruction.

Your Committee would suggest that the office of coroner, as now established by law, be reorganized entirely upon a new basis; and that the person appointed to the office should be in all cases a competent and respectable doctor in medicine, to be selected by the judges of the criminal courts, and that while the tenure of his office should be during good behavior, the incumbent to be liable to impeachment before the court for misdemeanors and derelictions of official duty. To said coroner immediate notice shall be given of every case of death in which an inquest into the cause by which life has been extinguished is demanded, by the magistrates, police, county constables, and bailiffs, to whose knowledge the occurrence of such death shall first come; and when any death, whether natu-

ral or violent, occurs in any jail, workhouse, penitentiary, or any other place for penal confinement, the notice of such death should in like manner be communicated by the wardens, governors, or superintendents of such institutions. Upon the receipt of which notice, the coroner shall call to his aid two other doctors in medicine, and, in conjunction with them, shall proceed forthwith to make the required inquisition in the fullest and most thorough manner; power being conferred upon him to take charge of the dead body, to summon and attach witnesses, and to take whatever steps he may deem necessary for the lawful and constitutional performance of his duties.

The entire proceedings of the medico-legal examination shall, at the discretion of the coroner, be strictly private; and in case of the refusal of any parties to comply with his injunction against publication, he should be clothed with the power of holding and punishing the contumacious offenders, as having committed a judicial contempt.

The examination in each case being completed, a full and detailed statement of it shall be drawn up, with the conclusions arrived at in regard to the cause of death clearly set forth; which statement, signed and sworn to by the medical experts by whom the examination was conducted, shall be delivered to the ordinary jury of twelve "good and lawful men," for their instruction. After the examination of other material evidence, and when the jury shall have returned their verdict, with the statement indorsed and sealed by the coroner, it shall by him be filed in the office of the prosecuting attorney for the district or county. The important point your Committee have in view is to secure the proper person to discharge the duties of the office; and this, we believe, can rarely—in fact, never—be done unless the selection be confined to regular, well-educated, and respectable graduates in medicine.

It may be necessary, in the large cities and populous counties, to appoint two or more coroners; different districts, with concurrent jurisdiction, being assigned to each.

Your Committee have already suggested that the coroner should be appointed by the judge of the criminal court of each county, or by any other court of law exercising original jurisdiction over criminal offences. This method of filling the office will be more successful in securing the selection of one having the special attainments demanded for the faithful and intelligent performance of its duties than that by popular election. Amid the strife and excite-

ment of politics and the predilections of party, those special attainments cannot be expected to be regarded with sufficient care, and the vote of the people will be as likely given to one candidate distinguished only for his fealty to party ties and usages, as to another eminent for his peculiar capacity and scientific acquirements. These considerations are independent of the tricks, bargainings, corruptions, and intrigues which are too often resorted to by professional politicians in our larger cities, in the wild hunt after that golden charm, the caucus nomination.

The proposition to conduct the preliminary medico-legal investigation in privacy at the discretion of the coroner, must command the assent of every reflecting mind. There is no difference, after all, in theory, between the examinations of the grand jury, whose proceedings are always conducted with closed doors, and those of the special inquisition of the coroner. The jurisdiction of the coroner does not extend to the trial of any party accused, but merely to an investigation into the cause of death, and whether that death was or was not feloniously produced. The grand jury have no power to try cases, but are assembled merely for the purpose of receiving accusations, making inquiries as to alleged violations of the laws, and to ascertain if there be sufficient evidence, and, if uncontradicted, to justify the finding of a true bill of indictment, and thus sending the party accused down to court for trial. Now, if the public interests demand that the proceedings of the grand jury be conducted in secrecy, there is no impropriety in recommending that the sessions of coroners' inquests should also be conducted with closed doors. The proposed privacy will abate the public excitement which always exists when a death demanding such an inquest occurs; it prevents misrepresentations in regard to the evidence, while it enables those to whom the examination is intrusted to perform their duties without interruption and with more caution and attention.

In regard to the proper compensation for the services of the coroner, the whole system of fees should be abolished, and he should receive, in lieu thereof, a certain specific annual remuneration, to be paid out of the treasury of the county or State. The two experts whom he calls to his aid should be entitled to a fee, either the same for each report made by them, or varying with the amount of time and labor which, in different cases, will be required of them.

The laws of all civilized countries in the Old World provide for the proper remuneration not only of coroners, but also of experts

and medical witnesses summoned to give purely professional opinions. Your Committee believe that, in many of the States in the Union, provision is made, inadequate it is true, for the payment of such claims.

In France, the judicial officers are required to subpœna medical men in the examination of the causes of all deaths occurring under suspicious or unknown circumstances. (*Code d'Instruction Criminelle*, Art. 44—281.) When the experts or medical witnesses are called upon by the law officers of the crown to make an examination, or give a professional opinion, they become entitled to certain fees, which are regulated by the character of the services rendered. *Hubert, Manuel des Lois*, 133. Paris, 1826.

In Bavaria, a liberal compensation for medico-legal opinions and examinations is provided by law. *Ordonnance Royale*, Mar. 31, 1826. The Austrian code authorizes the appointment of medical men, who are assigned to certain districts, and whose duty it is to superintend and draw up official reports of all medico-legal examinations and inquests in all cases of suspicious or mysterious deaths. In Vienna, the great and world renowned Rokitansky, who is the official pathologist, assists at the autopsies demanded by the judicial authorities.

The Russian laws authorize the appointment of similar officers with the same functions and jurisdiction.

In Ireland, statute 10 *George IV.*, c. 31, fees, not exceeding £5 sterling, are paid to medical witnesses on coroners' inquests. In England, an act was passed in 1836, authorizing one guinea for opinions, and two guineas for post-mortem examinations performed by medical men.

In Georgia, for each view of the body, where there is no dissection, the law allows the medical witness ten dollars as his remuneration; when dissection is requisite before the interment of the body, twenty dollars; and, if an examination of the body after burial is demanded, thus necessitating its disinterment, the sum allowed is not to exceed thirty dollars. There is also a fee of fifty dollars if a chemical analysis be required.

In most of the United States the laws authorize some small and insignificant compensation to the medical experts and witnesses. In the District of Columbia, under the present law, there is no legal provision for the payment of scientific services rendered on a coroner's inquest.

Now the law is inoperative without the professional action of a surgeon, physician, or chemist: it being necessary to make, as

shown, in one case, a careful anatomical investigation; in another, to explain the physiological and toxicological effects of drugs; and, in another, or conjointly with this, to test the contents of the alimentary tube, and, even of the blood and its eliminations. Unless legal provision be made by government for the pecuniary remuneration of the individuals to whom these important, and often most indispensable offices may be assigned, public justice is suspended, and the administration of the law, by the action of the courts, arrested; or these laborious professional duties performed for the use of the government gratuitously, which is an anomaly in our social and political system. No other class of citizens are expected to perform professional duties without compensation—nor will they perform them—and these individuals, by refusing their aid, as it is reasonable that they should, may thus render the action of the law void and inoperative.

Considering the great amount of beneficiary duties necessarily devolving on the medical man, it is still more important that some legal provision for the payment of his just claims should be made.

A physician is summoned to render aid to a person supposed to be poisoned or feloniously injured by the action of another party—he attends without reward, the patient being probably a pauper. The present illiberal system expects that he make the necessary inquiry after death by anatomical investigation or chemical analysis; and that he communicate in detail the result as a witness in court, giving, at the same time, an opinion based upon this investigation, which none but those learned in medical science are capable of doing (in the meantime neglecting his private affairs and his remunerative professional business), and there is no pecuniary provision made in his case except as a common witness—while all other agents of equal, and oftentimes of much less, importance to a correct understanding of the facts and a just judgment, are promptly and amply provided for.

The remedy naturally suggested to the profession by self-respect, is a declension, firm though respectful, to perform autopsies and make chemical analyses when requested, or illegally commanded, by the judicial authorities in those States of the Union where there is no provision for the remuneration of medical experts and witnesses. It is time, your Committee believe, for the members of our profession to assume a frank, bold and resolute position. There is no legal authority which can compel a medical man to open a dead body, or make a chemical examination of the contents of the ali-

mentary tube; and, should he be subpœnaed to attend an investigation, it is only admissible to testify as to facts within his own knowledge, and he can refuse respectfully and firmly to go further.

The members of the profession of medicine everywhere are, as a class, beneficent and self-sacrificing, laboring always cheerfully and gratuitously in the cause of humanity and in the service of the destitute. But they, too, must live while they thus labor, and it cannot be expected by government, they should serve the wealthy in their most professional position without the obligation being recognized and requited.

I cannot bring this report to a conclusion without acknowledging the important aid and counsel so cheerfully extended by Drs. D. Francis Condie, of Pennsylvania, and Grafton Tyler, of Georgetown, D. C., my colleagues on the Committee appointed at the Philadelphia meeting of the National Medical Association.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. J. SEMMES, M. D.,
Chairman of the Committee.

Washington, April 14, 1857.

Dr. J. C. Hale

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